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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MLS  
PACOM FOR FPA (HUSO)

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [TH](#)

SUBJECT: SOUTHERN VIOLENCE: COORDINATED RAIDS ACROSS THE SOUTH

[11.](#) (SBU) SUMMARY: On October 26 small groups of militants launched a series of 49 apparently coordinated raids in rural areas throughout far southern Thailand. Four civilians and two militants were reported killed in the raids, which appear to have been focused on stealing weapons from village defense volunteers. While following in the pattern of past raids, their number and apparent coordination is troubling, and demonstrates the organizational capabilities of the insurgents. END SUMMARY.

[12.](#) (SBU) On October 26 militants launched what appear to be well coordinated raids in rural areas in the far southern provinces of Narathiwat, Yala, and Pattani. A spokesman for the Thai 4th Army reported that, beginning at approximately 7 pm, small groups of militants went to villages throughout the three southernmost provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat, demanding that the local village defense volunteers hand over their weapons (NOTE: the defense volunteers are local civilians who have been given rudimentary military training and then armed, usually with shotguns, in order to protect villages in rural areas from insurgent attacks. END NOTE). The assailants reportedly shot two uncooperative village leaders, as well as two other civilians. Interestingly, the raiders did not shoot the village volunteers from whom they took the weapons.

[13.](#) (SBU) Defense offices in the three provinces reported to embosfs that there were 49 separate incidents over approximately a two hour period on the 26th. (NOTE: 26 in Yala, 15 in Pattani, 8 in Narathiwat. END NOTE). The militants were apparently focused on stealing weapons from village defense volunteers; taking 75 guns in the raids. Thai security forces killed two of the assailants and captured another after wounding him. Two other suspected militants were apprehended after they were seen placing spikes on a road. Nimuk Makache, Secretary General of the Yala Islamic Committee, told us he expects little information to come from those arrested as they will likely have little knowledge of any organization beyond their immediate cell.

[14.](#) (SBU) COMMENT: In many ways these organized "hit and run" style raids mirror the tactics seen in past incidents in the South. However, the choice of targets was different -- civilians rather than police or military outposts -- and interestingly the militants did not shoot first. This seems to suggest that the raiders were local people who knew who in the villages had been given weapons. While the militants' small group tactics look familiar, the apparent scale and level of coordination of the October 26 raids is troubling. A local observer commented that the aim of these raids was simply to steal weapons. Whatever their intent, the large number of raids -- over a large area in a short time span -- shows that the insurgents maintain significant organizational capabilities, while the Thai security forces are simply unable to protect villages across the whole region. END COMMENT

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